POULTRY

Cause of Failure in Poultry Raising.

The man that generally fails in poultry raising is the novice, who begins the raising of poultry on account of the glowing accounts he has seen of the ease with which it is done, and the enormous profits to be made. Millions of men have figured themselves rich on chickens. It merely requires a knowledge of the science of numbers. If a hen lays a hundred eggs a year and fifty of the chickens are pullets, and they in turn lay a hundred eggs a year, it takes but a little while to figure out enormous returns from a small investment. The unfortunate thing about the problem is that things do not work out in practice as they do on paper. With the beginner in poultry raising ignorance is the first obstacle, but with many it proves to be so large an obstacle that the attempt to raise poultry is not continued. To successfully raise poultry requires a large amount of knowledge, which must be acquired partly by experience.—Julia Smith, Cook Co., Ill.

Winter Eggs Profitable.

Winter eggs are far more profitable than eggs produced in the spring or summer. This is due to several reasons. One is that there are fewer eggs produced in the winter, and they are higher on that account. Another factor is that eggs are more uniformly good in the winter, and there is a larger demand for them, especially in hotels, restaurants and railroad trains. People that travel more generally call for eggs in the winter than in the summer. The cost of producing the winter egg is not much greater than the cost of producing the summer egg, because in the winter the hens have to be kept and fed whether they are laying or not; and this winter cost of keeping has to be charged against the production of the summer egg if the hen produces eggs only in the summer. Every farmer should therefore try to secure most of his eggs in the winter season.—Mary Pickering, Elkhart Co., Ind., in Farmers' Review.

Time to Buy Young Stock.

October and November are the best months in which to buy stock, especially for the purchase of birds that are to be used in exhibitions. At this time of year most of the spring birds are becoming mature, and they have not lost their plumage through laying nor the beauty of their plumage through moulting. With a little judicious feeding these birds may be made successful exhibition birds, but another year they would be sadly out of form and feather.

Exhibition Coops.

Many of our readers at this time of year are making coops for the exhibition of fowls. The usual size now in favor is 28 inches long, 18 inches wide, and 30 inches high. The length extends from the front of the coop to the back, rather than from side to side. This makes it possible to place a larger number of fowls in the same row, and makes it easier to keep drafts off the birds.

Parafining the Fowls.

In a recent show visited by the writer he noticed some birds whose legs were highly polished. As there was no indication of any coloring matter or the application of any glazing material, he inquired of the show man as to the material used. His answer was that they had been rubbed with alcohol in which wax had been dissolved.

HORTICULTURE

The Keiffer Pear.

The Keiffer pear is the most prominent pear being grown east of the Rocky Mountains. While it is not so highly recommended as the Bartlett, yet it is to-day more widely grown than even that famous pear. The Keiffer occupies the place among pears that the Ben Davis does among apples. Like the Ben Davis, its quality is fair to poor, yet the tree is such a heavy bearer and can be so depended upon to produce a crop, that we find orchardists planting it more extensively than any of the other pears. It may be that its poor quality comes largely from our ignorance of how it should be handled. An orchardist tells the writer that the Keiffer is a very good pear if allowed to hang on the tree until fully matured and then laid away in a dark place to mellow. In such a place it should be kept for six weeks, and when taken out will have a good flavor and a proper texture for eating. He says that usually they are picked while immature, although apparently of good size, and that that accounts for the very pronounceable lack of flavor in this pear. I am not at all sure that his opinion is correct, but certainly now and then we do find some Keiffer pears that are very good for eating raw. The principal growers of Keiffers say that they do not consider it as a dessert pear, but as a cooking pear; but for a cooking pear we need as high a flavor as for any other purpose. If there is any flavor in the Keiffer pear that ordinary treatment does not bring out, it should be secured through a better treatment.

When large orchards of Keiffer pears are planted, they should in no case be planted by themselves. Some other pear that blooms at the same time should be planted with them. The Garber is regarded as the best for this purpose. The Keiffer pear, more than any other of which we know, requires to be cross-pollenized. When left to the pollenization with its own pollen, it is a very uncertain bearer, and more than one great orchard has been cut down because the owner did not know what to do to insure fruitfulness. Where an orchard of Keiffer pears has been brought to bearing age, and no trees for cross pollenizing it have been planted, years of time will be saved by grafting the branches with the varieties that should have been used for pollenization.—Farmers' Review.

The small apples in the orchard can be better utilized for vinegar making than anything else. These apples are of practically no value for any other purpose. The expense of picking them up off the ground is about the only expense to be considered. Yet Nature stands ready with her different kinds of bacteria to change the cider made into a product that is always in demand—cider-vinegar. About the only thing needed in the way of machinery is a cider mill that for an orchard of say 100 trees should not cost more than $15. The making of vinegar is not a great task, and the science requires attention to only a few general principles.

The package counts for so much in the selling of fruit that on some markets there has grown up the adage, "the package sells the fruit."

Confining Fattening Birds.

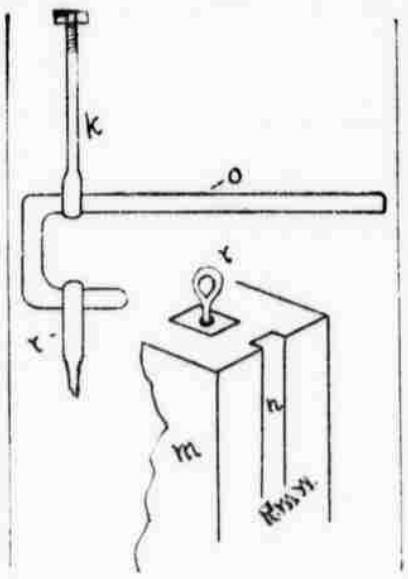
The American farmer generally does not like to think of his birds being confined at any time of the season when they could be out of doors. Yet if birds are to be fattened for any purpose that end can be obtained far better by confining them than by allowing them to run

AGRICULTURE

A Home-Made Post Driver.

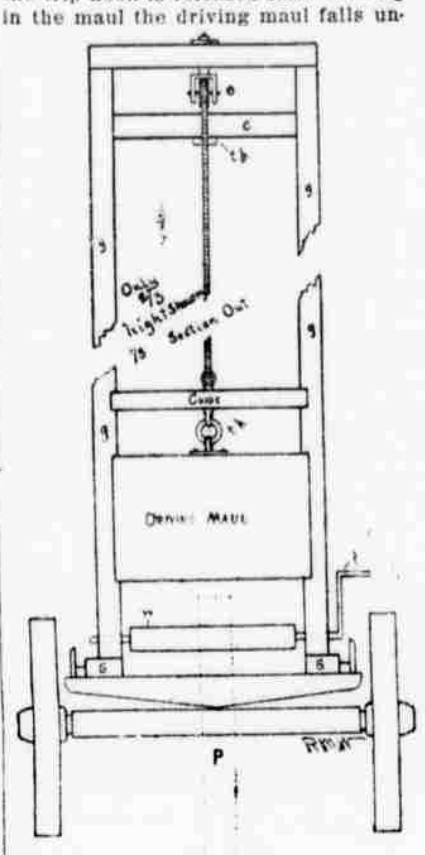
Fence building, where the posts are driven by a hand maul, is a pretty strenuous proposition—for the fellow who drives the posts. Have you stood on the wagon, or a box and putting all your strength into the stroke of the maul missed the end of the post and immediately found yourself top end down with your feet playing spectacular gyrations in the air and your legs doing double time in trying to disentangle themselves from the post along side of which you are planted with head and shoulders jammed tight to the base? I have. It's very funny—for the other fellow. The maul is all right where there are only a few posts to drive or some to "settle" after the winter's freezing and the spring thawing, but where there is fence to build some more handy and practical device is desirable. If you are going to build any fence this year, or any other, it will pay you to have such an arrangement as is shown in the illustration for driving the posts.

Nearly every farmer in the west has more or less fence to build every year and in most sections the posts for such fences are driven instead of being set into dug holes. Where the nature of the soil will permit it this is the quickest and cheapest way, and, where a driver is used, the easiest way, as well. The cut shows a rear end view of a home made post driver that acts on the same principle as a pile driver, that is easily and cheaply constructed and that will drive the post quickly with a minimum expenditure of energy on the part of the operator. The whole outfit is made to set on the running gears of a farm wagon having the ordinary height of wheel. The frame with the driving maul is intended to extend two feet or more beyond the rear axle. The bed pieces "s" should be made of sound timber 6x8 inches, and 8x10 inches is none too heavy to make a rigid frame that will not give a troublesome vibration from the jar of the maul. These side frame pieces "s" are framed together at the forward end and at about 2 feet from the rear end by pieces of same dimensions long enough to have the upright guide pieces "g" set two feet apart when placed flush with "s" at bottom. The uprights "g" are framed into the bed



pieces at the extreme rear end and should be of 4x4 or 4x6 inch stuff. They may be 12 or 14 feet high. With a well weighted maul 12 feet is ample. Care should be taken in selecting the material for these upright pieces which are to act as the guide for the slides for the heavy maul and they should be of straight grained stuff that will not warp. From the top of these pieces are run other pieces 4x4 to the front of the frame to act as braces. Other short braces are placed on each side frame framed into "g" about 3 feet up and into "s" about 3 feet forward. The windlass "w" made by rounding off the edges of an 8x8 or 10x10 inch timber is placed three-fourths of the way from the rear to the front. Run a square iron rod through the center of the piece and round it where it rests in its bearings on either side. The handle "f" may be an extension of the same rod, rounded at the handle.

A cross bar shown at "c" is nailed on or framed into the two side timbers that run from the top of "g" to the bed frame to near the front end. On this cross piece "c" is bolted the trip block, indicated at "t b." This extends far enough toward the center of the upright frame "g," "g," to touch the end of the trip hook, which is located at the point shown by "t h." Thus, when the maul is elevated until the trip hook is released from the ring in the maul the driving maul falls un-



impeded by the weight of the rope on the end of the post being driven. In the small cut the pattern of the trip bar is shown "o," and the manner of connecting the maul to the rope attached to the guide bar by the ring bolt shown at "k." On reaching the top the trip block "t b" touches the end of the bar "o," throwing it downward and withdrawing the lower point from the ring bolt "r" set into the end of the driving maul as shown in the outline. This outline "m," of the driving maul also shown at "n" the groove that is cut from each side to fit over the uprights "g." This maul may be made of well seasoned oak, apple, walnut, hickory, or other heavy woods. If extra weight is required heavy plates of iron may be attached to the driving block. The cross bar marked "Guide" is necessary to keep the trip bar "o" always in position to strike the trip block "t b." Where a new line of fencing is being put up the wagon is driven astride the line. The post "P" is placed in position and the maul allowed to descend, repeating until driven to proper depth. If desired a handle may be placed on either side of the windlass, so that two men may work on the maul instead of one, greatly facilitating the operation.—R. M. Winans in Farmers' Review.

Rice Paper.

Most of our readers have seen rice paper, which is quite largely imported from China. This is made from a plant botanically known as "fatsia papyrifera." The part used is the pulp, which is split open and pressed flat, after which it is dried. It is used for painting on and also for pen work. An attempt is to be made to grow it in this country, and it has been imported into Florida. The plant belongs to the same family as ginseng.